

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 263

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve access to medical services for veterans seeking treatment at Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinics with exceptionally long waiting periods.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 8, 2003

Mr. DUNCAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve access to medical services for veterans seeking treatment at Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinics with exceptionally long waiting periods.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Outpatient  
5       Care Access Act of 2003”.

1 **SEC. 2. ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES FOR VETERANS**  
2 **SEEKING TREATMENT AT DEPARTMENT OF**  
3 **VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINICS**  
4 **WITH EXCEPTIONALLY LONG WAITING PERI-**  
5 **ODS.**

6 (a) ACCESS TO CARE.—Section 1710 of title 38,  
7 United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the  
8 following new subsection:

9 “(i) In the case of an outpatient clinic of the Depart-  
10 ment at which the waiting period for treatment of patients  
11 is six months or longer, the Secretary shall, for any vet-  
12 eran seeking medical services at that clinic who is in-  
13 formed by the clinic that the veteran will have such a wait-  
14 ing period, provide for the provision of needed medical  
15 services for that veteran from sources outside the Depart-  
16 ment. Provision of such services shall be under the same  
17 terms and conditions with respect to eligibilty and copay-  
18 ments (if any) as apply if such services were provided di-  
19 rectly by the Secretary through the clinic. The Secretary  
20 shall prescribe such regulations as necessary to carry out  
21 this subsection.”.

22 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (i) of section  
23 1710 of title 38, United States Code, shall take effect at  
24 the end of the 90-day period beginning on the date of the  
25 enactment of this Act.